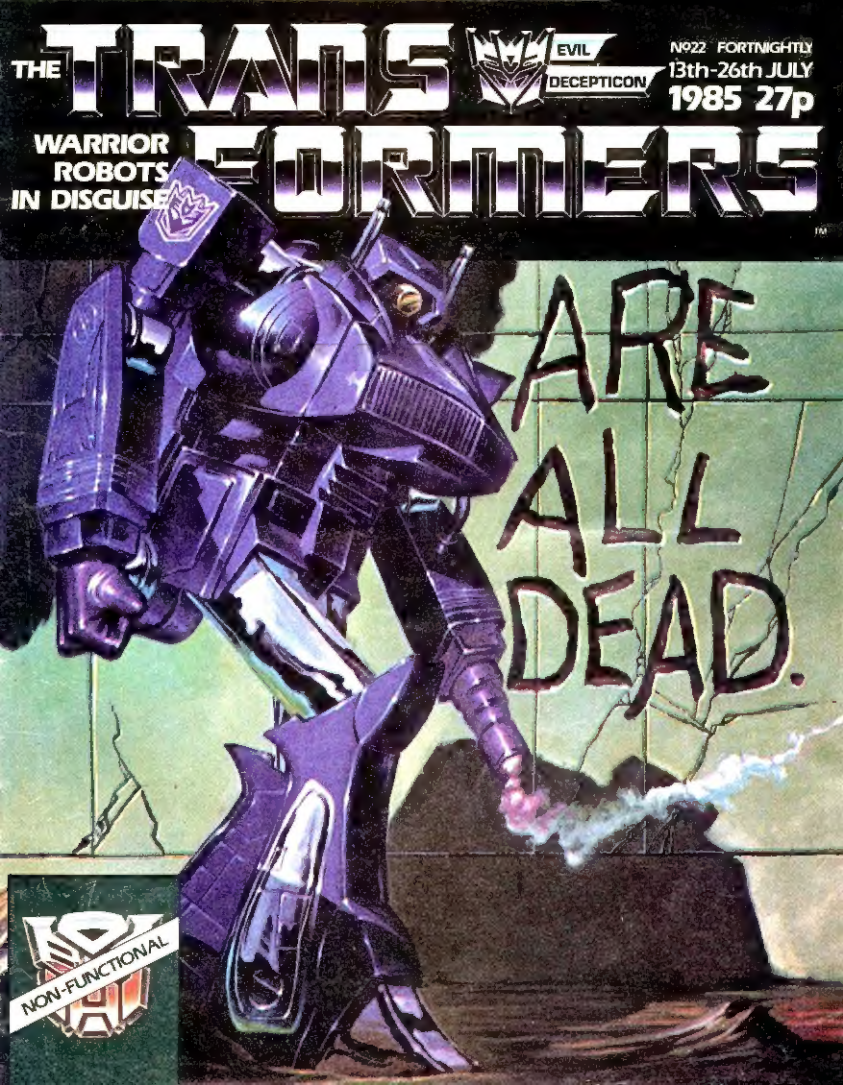
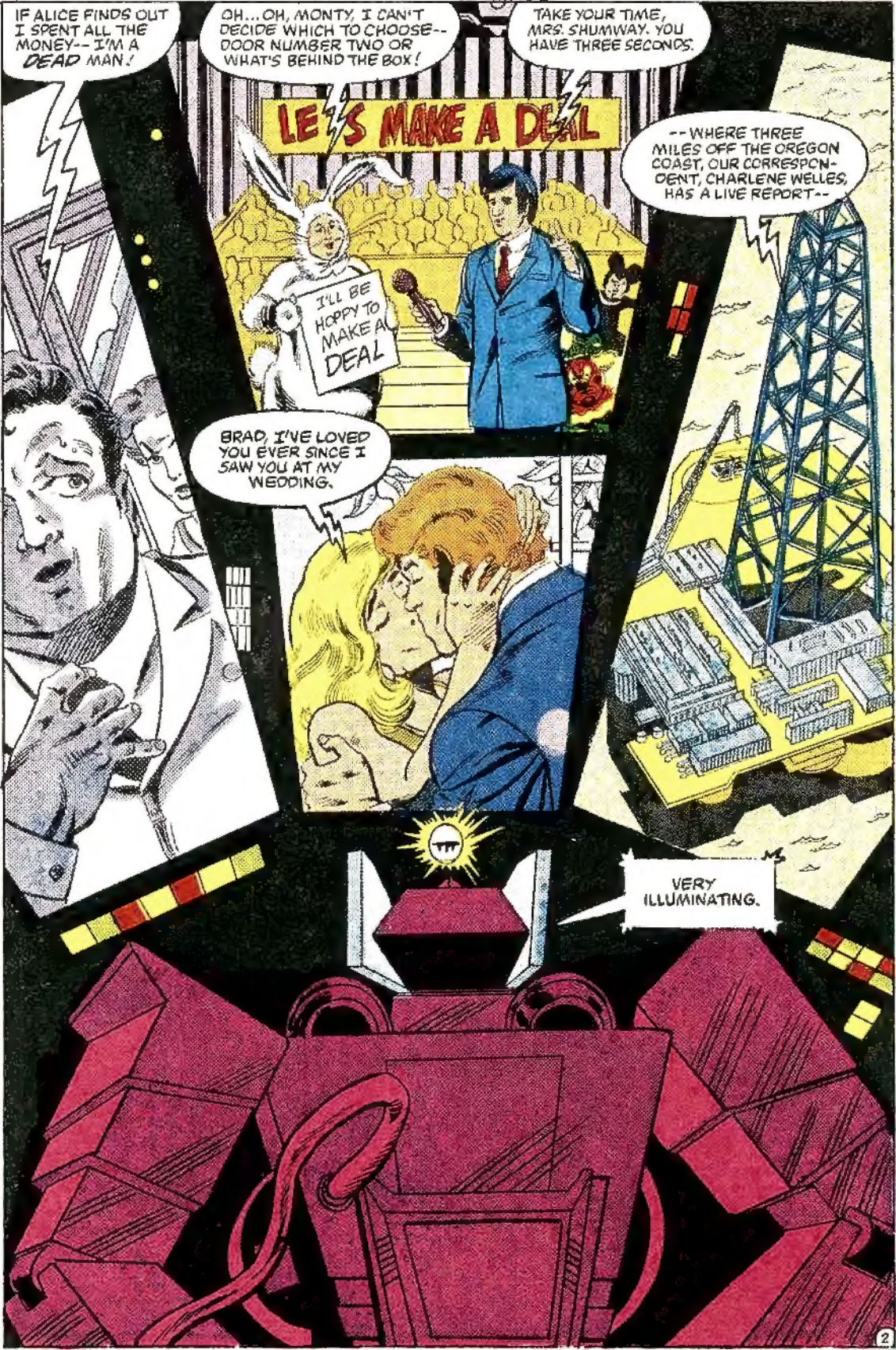
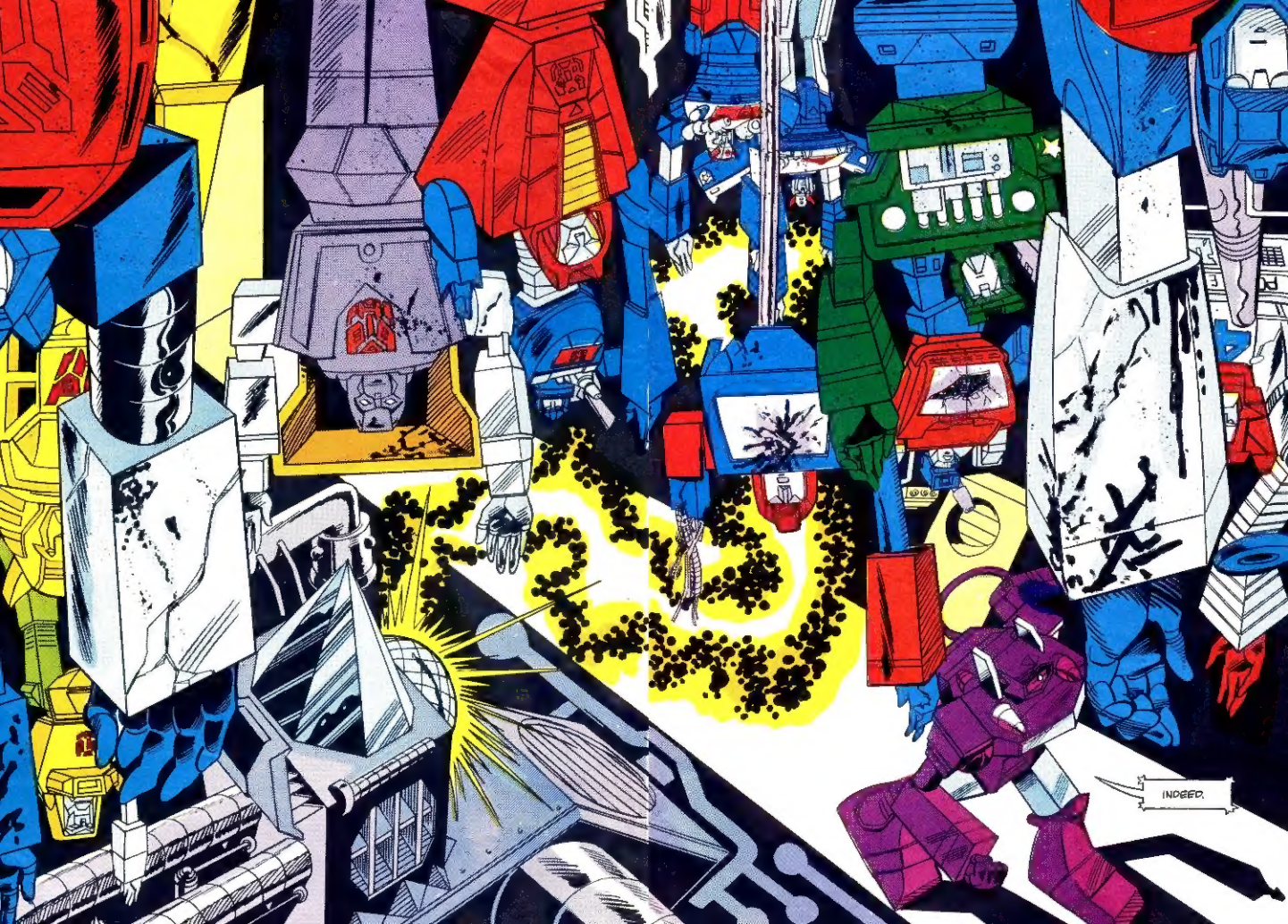
THE TRANSFORMERS
WARRIOR ROBOTS IN DISGUISE
EVIL DECEPTICON
No22 FORTNIGHTLY
13th-26th JULY
1985 27p



WHATSA MATTER, RALPHIE-BOY?
HOMINA-HOMINA-HOMINA-!
FLAKEY WAKEY
FLAKEY WAKEY


IF ALICE FINDS OUT I SPENT ALL THE MONEY-- I'M A DEAD MAN!
OH...OH, MONTY, I CAN'T DECIDE WHICH TO CHOOSE-- DOOR NUMBER TWO OR WHAT'S BEHIND THE BOX!
TAKE YOUR TIME, MRS. SHUMWAY. YOU HAVE THREE SECONDS.
LE'S MAKE A DEAL
I'LL BE HAPPY TO MAKE A DEAL
--WHERE THREE MILES OFF THE OREGON COAST, OUR CORRESPONDENT, CHARLENE WELLES, HAS A LIVE REPORT--
BRAD, I'VE LOVED YOU EVER SINCE I SAW YOU AT MY WEDDING.
VERY ILLUMINATING.

THESE HUMANS ARE EVEN MORE PRIMITIVE THAN I THOUGHT.
--A BEAUTIFUL CRUNCHING TACKLE ON NUMBER THIRTY TWO, TAILBACK OTIS PARSLEY--
I'M HERE WITH G.B. BLACKROCK, THE FLAMBOYANT MULTI-MILLIONAIRE INDUSTRIALIST. MR. BLACKROCK, THIS NEW OIL-DRILLING PLATFORM IS SAID TO HAVE NO EQUAL. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT IT?
OH, NO! I'M MASTER OF THIS HOUSEHOLD! I'M KING OF THIS CASTLE!
CHARLENE, THIS RIG IS SO REVOLUTIONARY THEY'LL HAVE TO INVENT A NEW NAME FOR IT! WE CAN EXTRACT FIFTY PER CENT MORE OIL FROM THE GROUND THAN ANY OTHER OPERATION. WE CAN--
--REFINE IT, DOCK TANKERS, LAND PLANES, DO EVERYTHING BUT PUMP PETROL INTO YOUR CAR.
BUT IT'S JOSIE BELLER HERE WHO REALLY DESERVES THE CREDIT!
MS. BELLER, YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED A COMPUTER GENIUS EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE ONLY A FEW YEARS OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL. WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THIS?
IT'S TRUE I DESIGNED THE SECONDARY AND TERTIARY OIL RECOVERY SYSTEMS--
--THE SEMI-AUTOMATED DEFENSE SYSTEM, THE REFINERY'S NON-POLLUTING DIGITIZED MICRO-SCRUBBERS, BUT I CONSIDER IT ALL JUST A PART OF MY JOB --
--WORKING FOR MR. BLACKROCK!
THE CONQUEST OF THIS PLANET AND ENSLAVEMENT OF ITS PEOPLE SHALL BE A SIMPLE TASK--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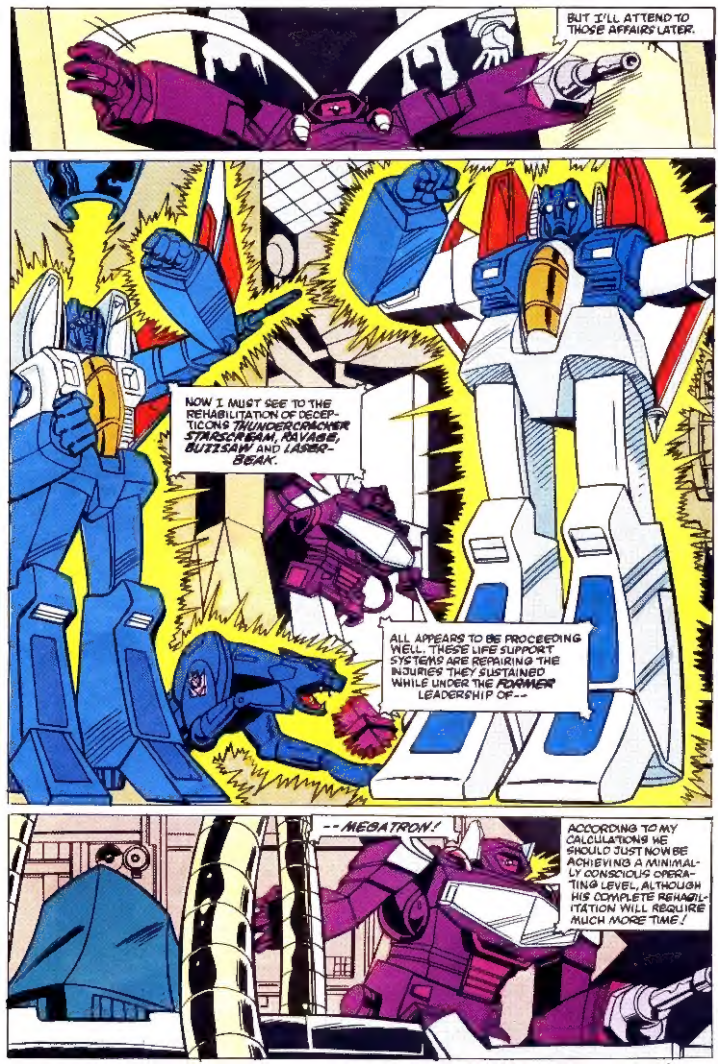
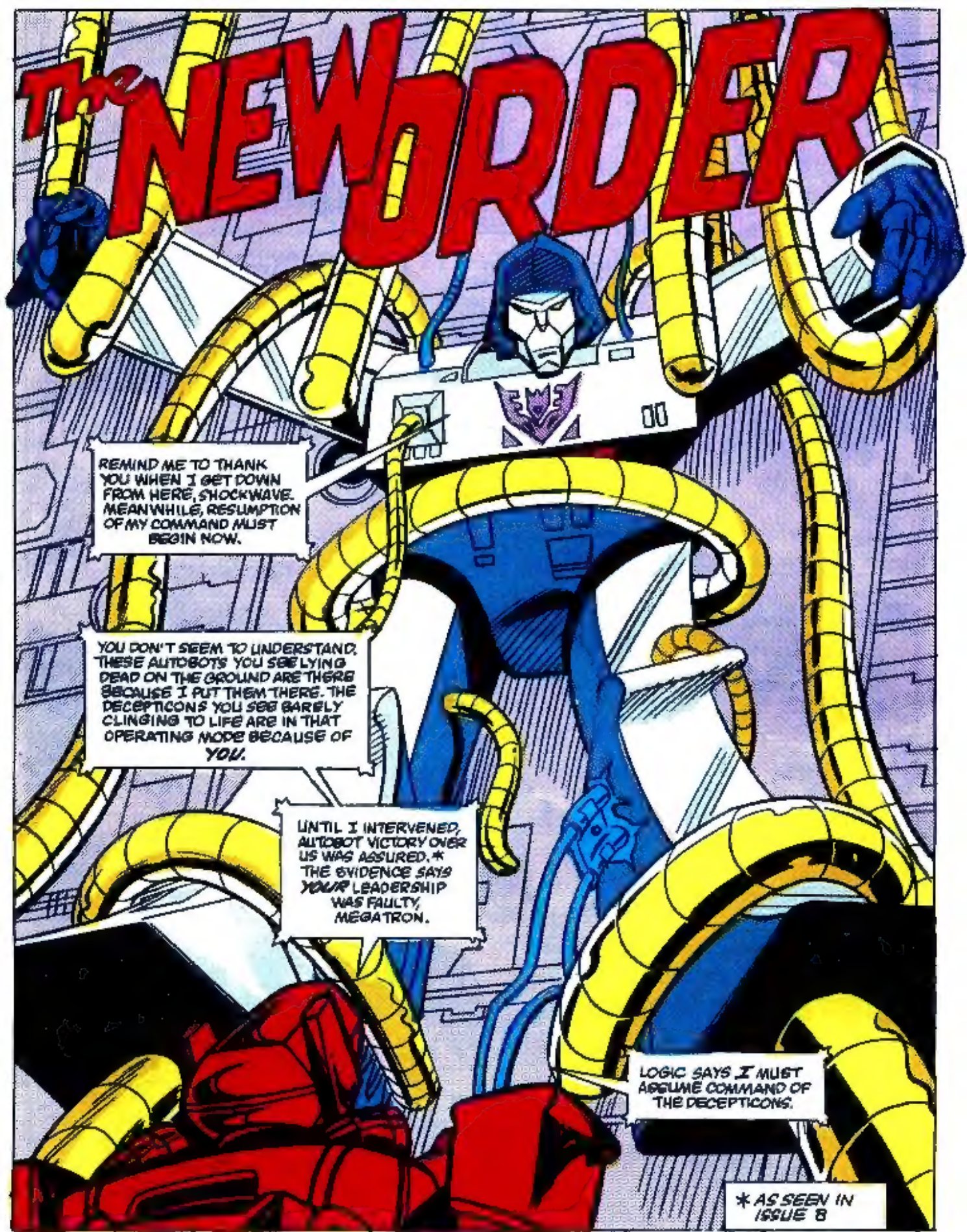
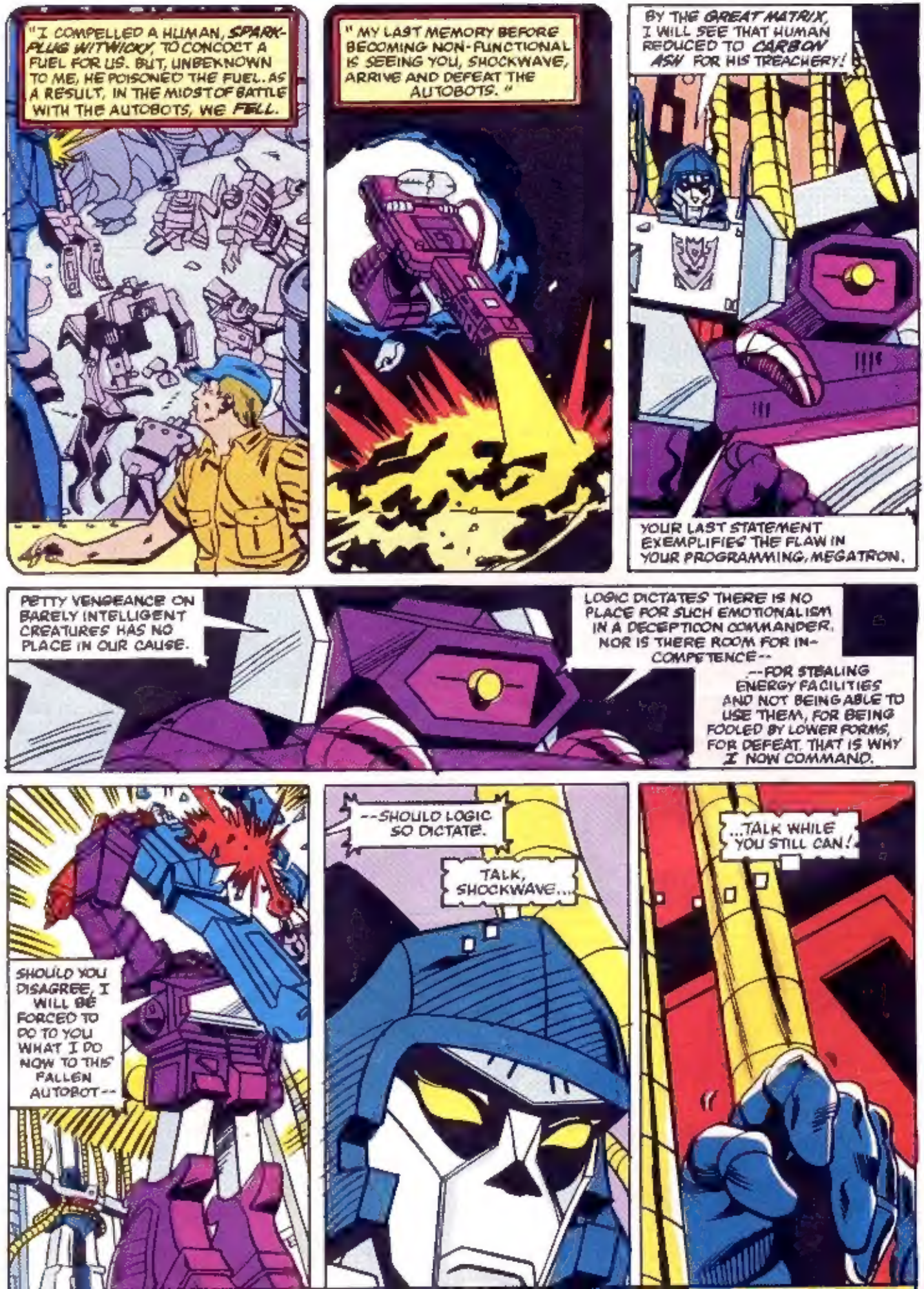

BUT I'LL ATTEND TO THOSE AFFAIRS LATER.
NOW I MUST SEE TO THE REHABILITATION OF DECEPTICONS THUNDERCRACKER, STARSCREAM, RAVAGE, BUZZSAW AND LASERBEAK.
ALL APPEARS TO BE PROCEEDING WELL. THESE LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEMS ARE REPAIRING THE INJURIES THEY SUSTAINED WHILE UNDER THE FORMER LEADERSHIP OF--
--MEGATRON!
ACCORDING TO MY CALCULATIONS HE SHOULD JUST NOW BE ACHIEVING A MINIMALLY CONSCIOUS OPERATING LEVEL, ALTHOUGH HIS COMPLETE REHABILITATION WILL REQUIRE MUCH MORE TIME!


The NEW ORDER
REMIND ME TO THANK YOU WHEN I GET DOWN FROM HERE, SHOCKWAVE. MEANWHILE, RESUMPTION OF MY COMMAND MUST BEGIN NOW.
YOU DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND. THESE AUTOBOTS YOU SEE LYING DEAD ON THE GROUND ARE THERE BECAUSE I PUT THEM THERE. THE DECEPTICONS YOU SEE BARELY CLINGING TO LIFE ARE IN THAT OPERATING MODE BECAUSE OF YOU.
UNTIL I INTERVENED, AUTOBOT VICTORY OVER US WAS ASSURED.* THE EVIDENCE SAYS YOUR LEADERSHIP WAS FAULTY, MEGATRON.
LOGIC SAYS I MUST ASSUME COMMAND OF THE DECEPTICONS.
* AS SEEN IN ISSUE 8

BOB BUDIANSKY SCRIPT | ALAN KUPPERBERG ART | RICK PARKER LETTERS | NEL YOMTOV COLOUR | JIM OWSLEY EDITOR | JAMES SHOOTER EDITOR IN CHIEF

YOU WILL EXPLAIN NOW HOW YOU PERMITTED OUR POSITION TO DETERIORATE SO DRASTICALLY, MEGATRON.
AS.. COMMANDER... IT IS YOUR RIGHT TO DEMAND ANYTHING OF ME. IT IS MY PRIVILEGE TO OBLIGE.
"AS YOU KNOW, ON OUR HOME PLANET, CYBERTRON, WAR RAGED FOR MILLENIA AS THE WEAK-WILLED PEACE-LOVING AUTOBOTS TRIED TO PREVENT US DECEPTICONS FROM ACHIEVING SUPREMACY SO WE COULD USE OUR PLANET AS A BASE TO CONQUER OTHER WORLDS.
"THEN WE LEARNED OF A GROUP OF THE MIGHTIEST AUTOBOT WARRIORS WHO HAD LEFT ON AN EXPEDITION ABOARD THE VERY SPACECRAFT WE'RE IN NOW, THE ARK, TO CLEAR A PATH THROUGH AN ASTEROID BELT THREATENING OUR PLANET.
"WE DECEPTICONS USED OUR OWN CRAFT TO AMBUSH THAT EXPEDITION. AND ALTHOUGH YOU STAYED BEHIND ON OUR CRAFT, SHOCK-WAVE, OUR ASSAULT WOULD HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL --
"--HAD NOT THE AUTOBOT LEADER, OPTIMUS PRYME, CRASHED THE ARK INTO A NEARBY PLANET -- THIS PLANET -- EARTH.
"FOR FOUR MILLION YEARS WE ALL LAY DORMANT UNTIL THE ARK WAS STIRRED BY THE RUMBLINGS OF THIS EARTH STRUCTURE WE'RE BURIED IN -- THIS VOLCANO. THE ARK REPAIRED US AND WE AWOKE TO A WORLD BRIMMING WITH ORGANIC LIFE AND ENERGY RESOURCES.
"WE DECEPTICONS TOOK WHAT IS CALLED A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AND SHAPED IT INTO OUR FORTRESS. BUT WE COULD NOT DRAW FROM IT THE ENERGY WE REQUIRED.


"I COMPELLED A HUMAN, SPARK-PLUG WITWICKY, TO CONCOCT A FUEL FOR US. BUT, UNBEKNOWN TO ME, HE POISONED THE FUEL. AS A RESULT, IN THE MIDST OF BATTLE WITH THE AUTOBOTS, WE FELL.
" MY LAST MEMORY BEFORE BECOMING NON-FUNCTIONAL IS SEEING YOU, SHOCKWAVE, ARRIVE AND DEFEAT THE AUTOBOTS. "
BY THE GREAT MATRIX, I WILL SEE THAT HUMAN REDUCED TO CARBON ASH FOR HIS TREACHERY!
YOUR LAST STATEMENT EXEMPLIFIES THE FLAW IN YOUR PROGRAMMING, MEGATRON.
PETTY VENGEANCE ON BARELY INTELLIGENT CREATURES HAS NO PLACE IN OUR CAUSE.
LOGIC DICTATES THERE IS NO PLACE FOR SUCH EMOTIONALISM IN A DECEPTICON COMMANDER, NOR IS THERE ROOM FOR IN-COMPETENCE--
--FOR STEALING ENERGY FACILITIES AND NOT BEING ABLE TO USE THEM, FOR BEING FOOLED BY LOWER FORMS, FOR DEFEAT. THAT IS WHY I NOW COMMAND.
SHOULD YOU DISAGREE, I WILL BE FORCED TO DO TO YOU WHAT I DO NOW TO THIS FALLEN AUTOBOT--
--SHOULD LOGIC SO DICTATE.
TALK, SHOCKWAVE...
...TALK WHILE YOU STILL CAN!

THE TRANSFORMERS
WARRIOR ROBOTS IN DISGUISE
HEROIC AUTOBOT
№23 FORTNIGHTLY
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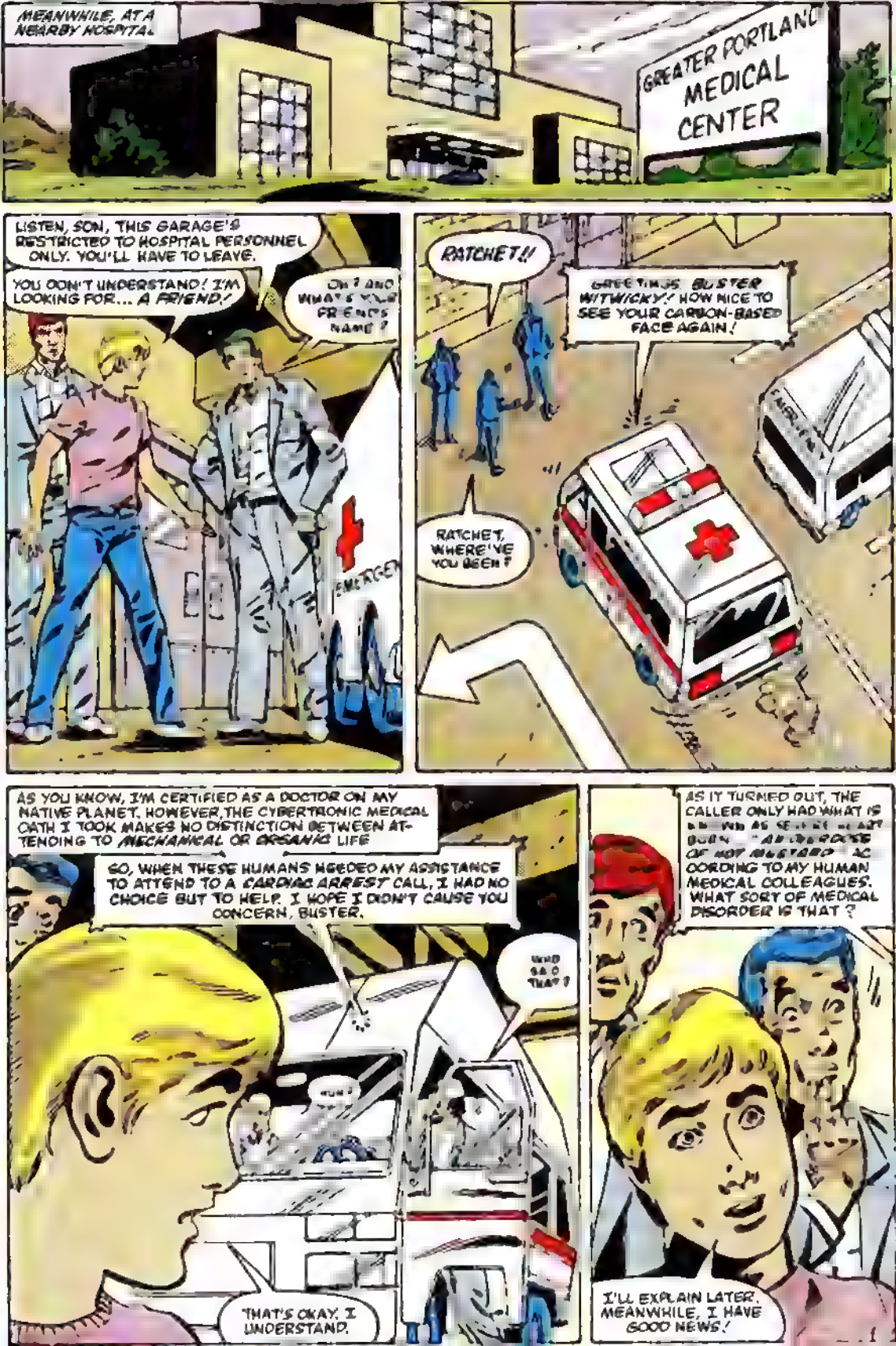
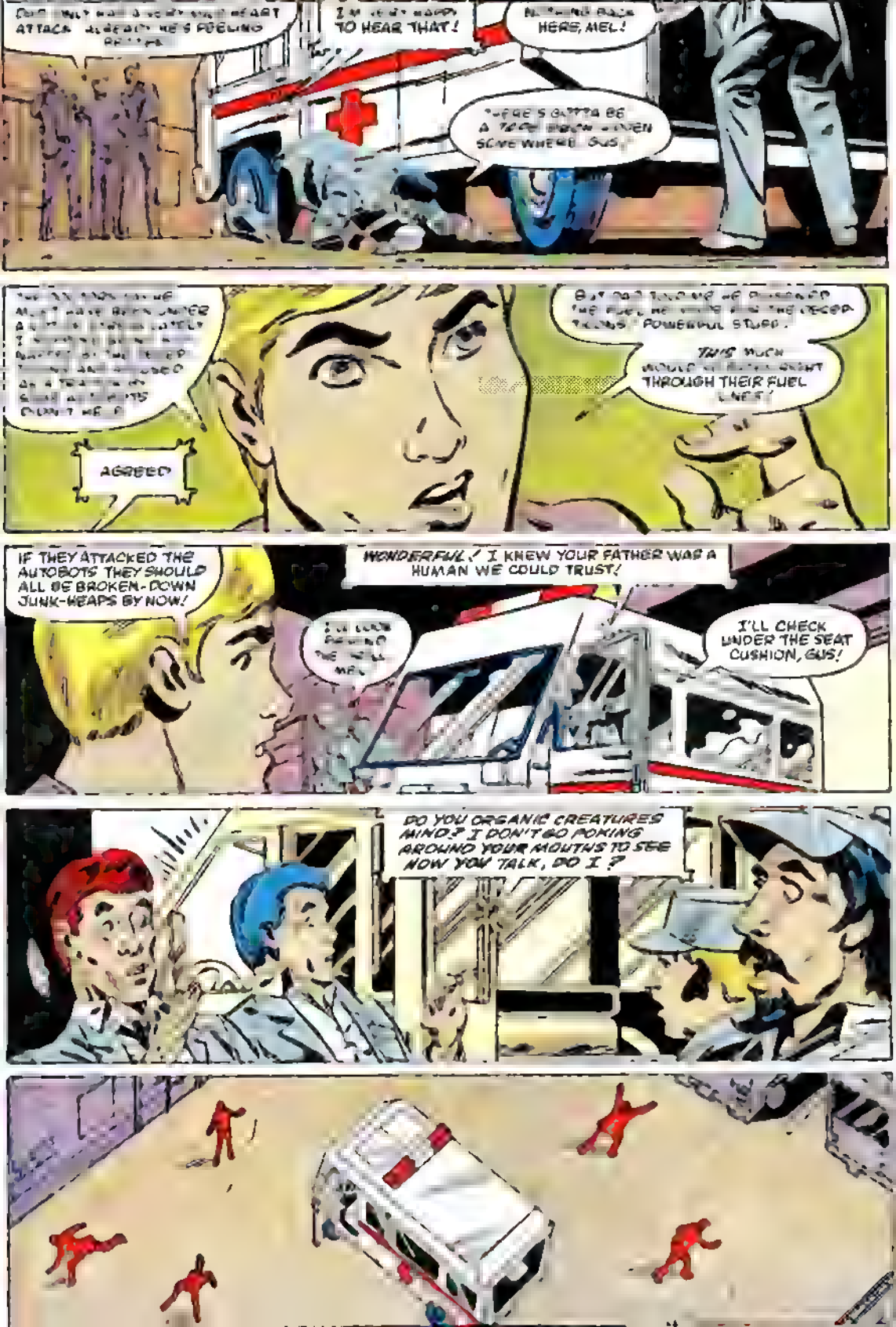
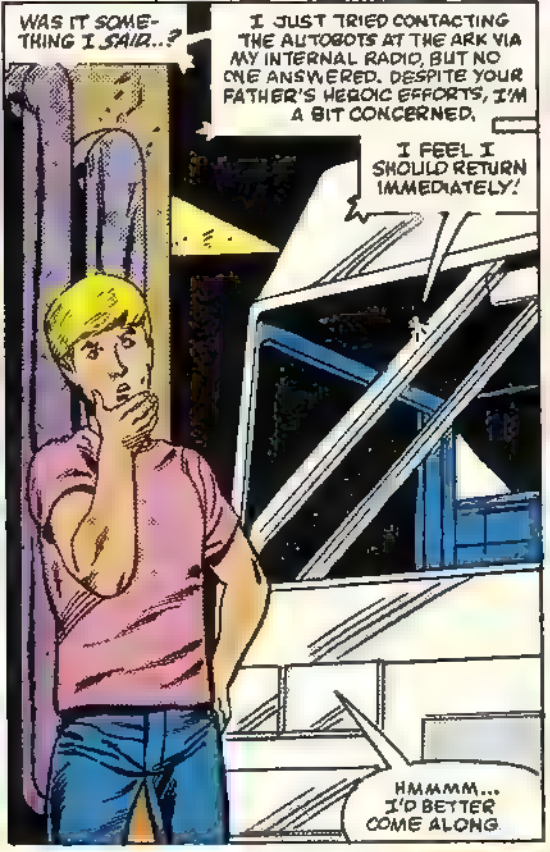
DISCOVER PRIME'S FATE – INSIDE!

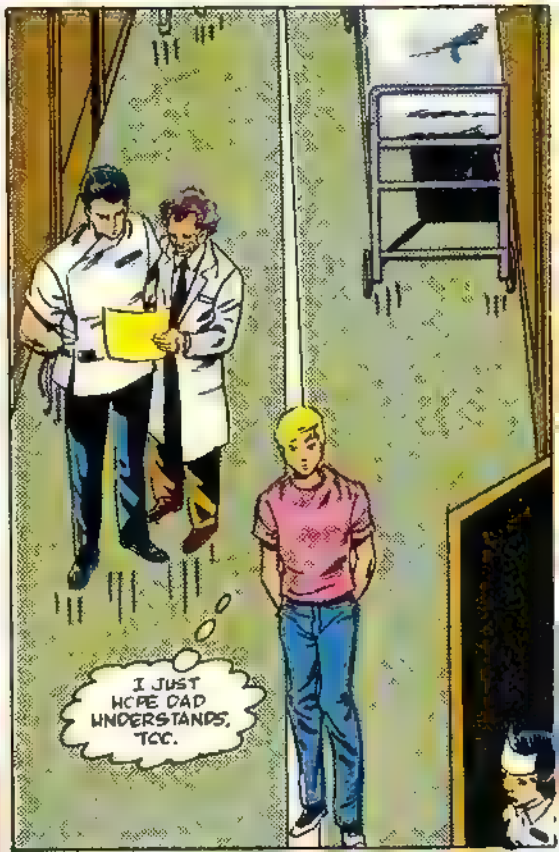

MEANWHILE, AT A NEARBY HOSPITAL
GREATER PORTLAND MEDICAL CENTER
LISTEN, SON, THIS GARAGE'S RESTRICTED TO HOSPITAL PERSONNEL ONLY. YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAVE.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! I'M LOOKING FOR... A FRIEND!
OH? AND WHAT'S YOUR FRIEND'S NAME?
EMERGENCY
RATCHET!!
GREETINGS, BUSTER WITWICKY!! HOW NICE TO SEE YOUR CARBON-BASED FACE AGAIN!
RATCHET, WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?
AS YOU KNOW, I'M CERTIFIED AS A DOCTOR ON MY NATIVE PLANET. HOWEVER, THE CYBERTRONIC MEDICAL OATH I TOOK MAKES NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN ATTENDING TO MECHANICAL OR ORGANIC LIFE
SO, WHEN THESE HUMANS NEEDED MY ASSISTANCE TO ATTEND TO A CARDIAC ARREST CALL, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO HELP. I HOPE I DIDN'T CAUSE YOU CONCERN, BUSTER.
WHO SAID THAT?
HUH?
THAT'S OKAY, I UNDERSTAND.
AS IT TURNED OUT, THE CALLER ONLY HAD WHAT IS KNOWN AS SEVERE HEART BURN - "ARTHRITIS OF THE MIDSTOMACH" ACCORDING TO MY HUMAN MEDICAL COLLEAGUES. WHAT SORT OF MEDICAL DISORDER IS THAT?
I'LL EXPLAIN LATER. MEANWHILE, I HAVE GOOD NEWS!

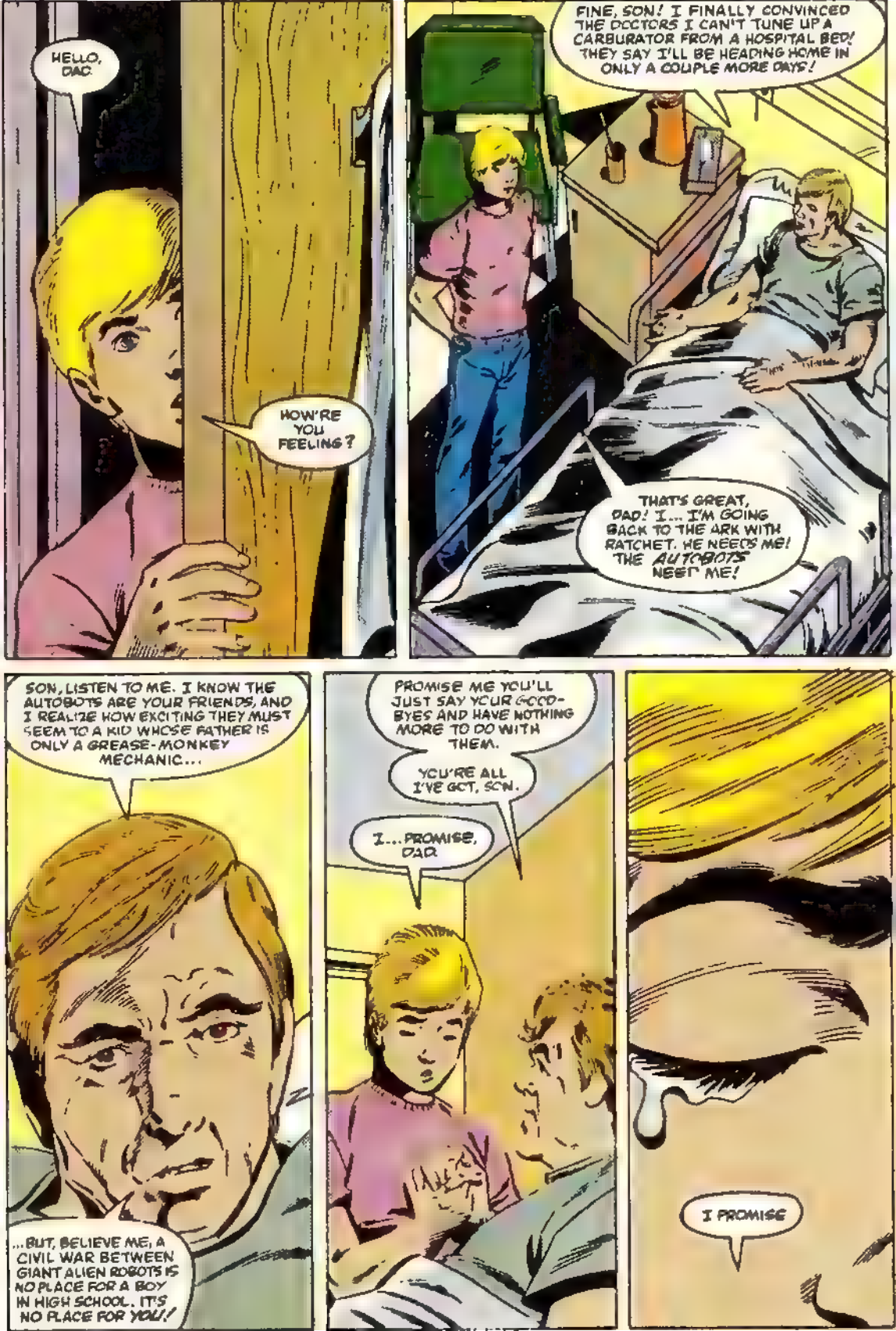

I'M VERY HAPPY TO HEAR THAT!
HERE, MEL!
THERE'S GOTTA BE A TAPE RECORDER SOME WHERE, GUS.
AGREED
BUT DID YOU SEE THE FUEL HE WAS USING IN THE RECORDER THING? POWERFUL STUFF.
THIS MUCH WOULD BLAST RIGHT THROUGH THEIR FUEL LINES!
IF THEY ATTACKED THE AUTOBOTS THEY SHOULD ALL BE BROKEN-DOWN JUNK-HEAPS BY NOW!
WONDERFUL! I KNEW YOUR FATHER WAS A HUMAN WE COULD TRUST!
I'LL CHECK UNDER THE SEAT CUSHION, GUS!
DO YOU ORGANIC CREATURES MIND? I DON'T GO POKING AROUND YOUR MOUTHS TO SEE HOW YOU TALK, DO I?

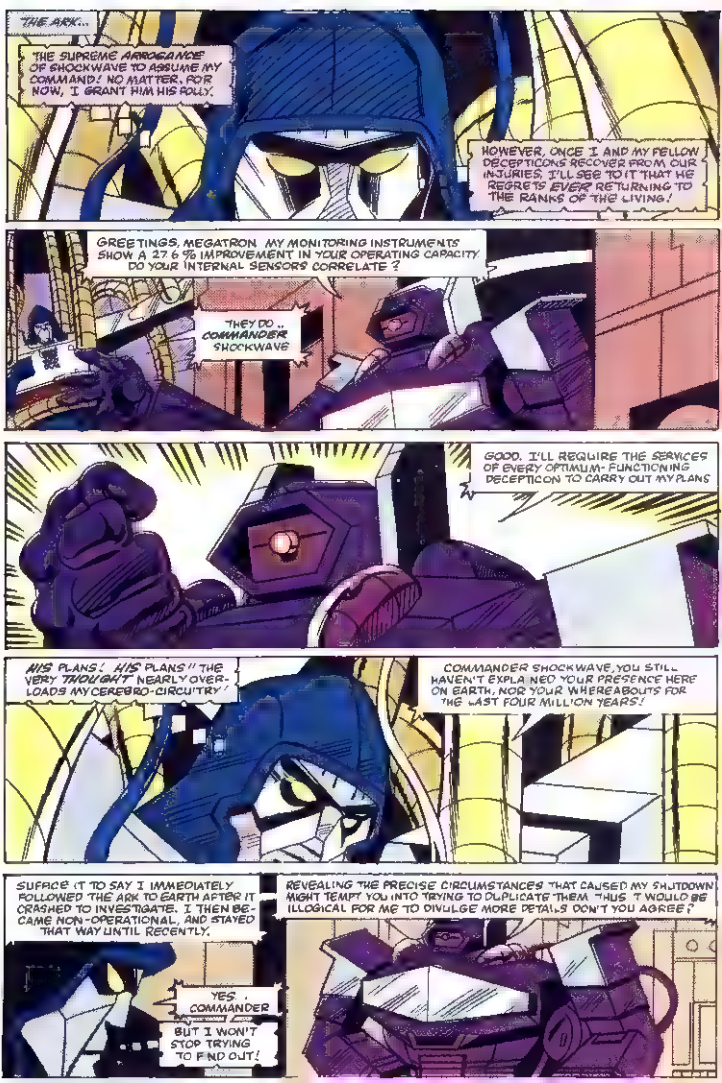

WAS IT SOMETHING I SAID..?
I JUST TRIED CONTACTING THE AUTOBOTS AT THE ARK VIA MY INTERNAL RADIO, BUT NO ONE ANSWERED. DESPITE YOUR FATHER'S HEROIC EFFORTS, I'M A BIT CONCERNED.
I FEEL I SHOULD RETURN IMMEDIATELY!
HMMMM... I'D BETTER COME ALONG.

OUT OF THE QUESTION! THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT DANGERS MAY AWAIT US! I WILL GO ALONE!
BUT THE ARK IS FAR AWAY! THINK OF ALL THE SUSPICIONS YOU'LL AROUSE BY DRIVING ALL THAT DISTANCE WITHOUT A HUMAN DRIVER!
IT MUST BE SOME KIND OF TRICK, MEL!
RIGHT, GUS, A TRICK... IT'S ONLY A TRICK...

UNFORTUNATELY, YOUR REASONING IS SOUND, BUSTER. YOU CAN COME ALONG. SOMETIMES YOUR THINKING IS EQUAL TO THAT OF ANY ROBOT I KNOW!
I'M... ER... FLATTERED!
LISTEN, I JUST HAVE TO RUN UPSTAIRS AND SAY GOODBYE TO DAD!
OF COURSE! I UNDERSTAND!

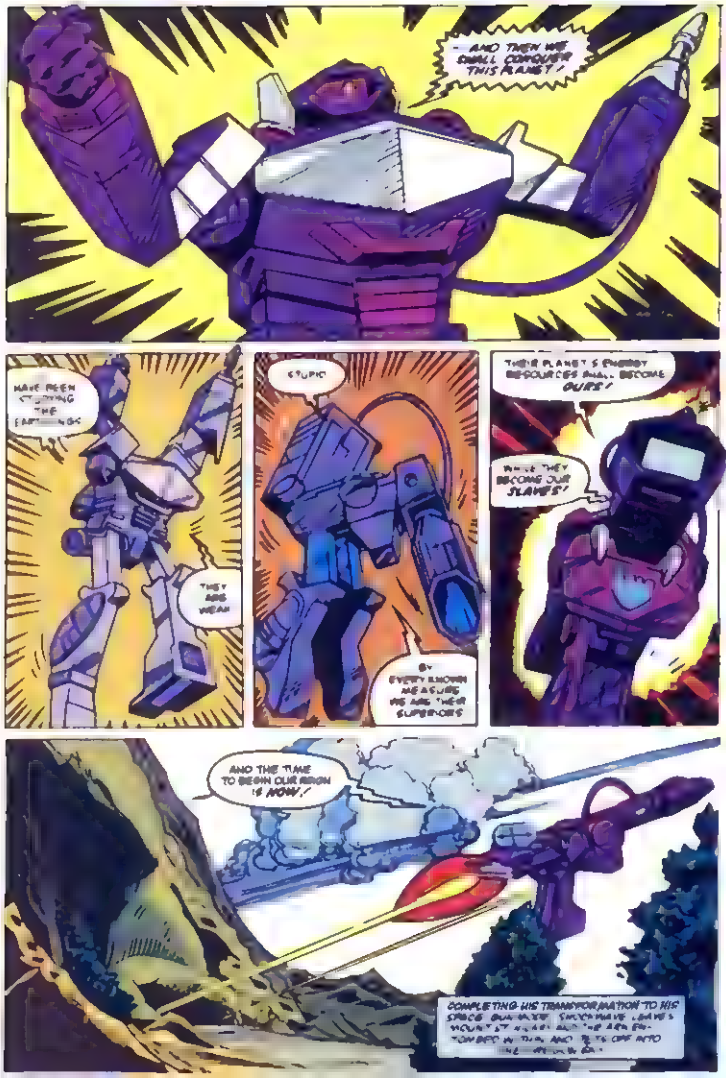

I JUST HOPE DAD UNDERSTANDS, TOO.

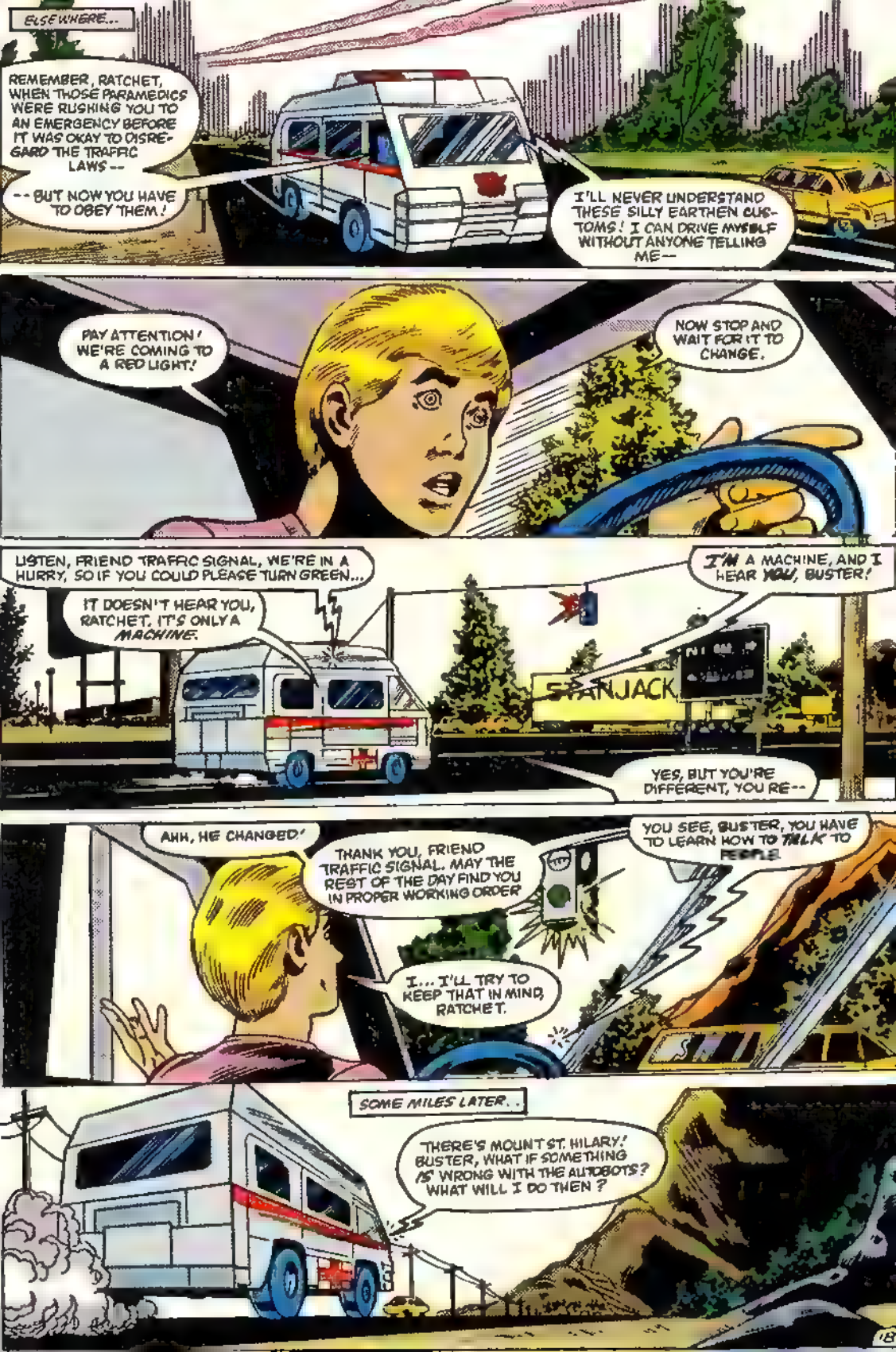

HELLO, DAD.
HOW'RE YOU FEELING?
FINE, SON! I FINALLY CONVINCED THE DOCTORS I CAN'T TUNE UP A CARBURATOR FROM A HOSPITAL BED! THEY SAY I'LL BE HEADING HOME IN ONLY A COUPLE MORE DAYS!
THAT'S GREAT, DAD! I... I'M GOING BACK TO THE ARK WITH RATCHET. HE NEEDS ME! THE AUTOBOTS NEED ME!
SON, LISTEN TO ME. I KNOW THE AUTOBOTS ARE YOUR FRIENDS, AND I REALIZE HOW EXCITING THEY MUST SEEM TO A KID WHOSE FATHER IS ONLY A GREASE-MONKEY MECHANIC...
...BUT, BELIEVE ME, A CIVIL WAR BETWEEN GIANT ALIEN ROBOTS IS NO PLACE FOR A BOY IN HIGH SCHOOL. IT'S NO PLACE FOR YOU!
PROMISE ME YOU'LL JUST SAY YOUR GOOD-BYES AND HAVE NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH THEM.
YOU'RE ALL I'VE GOT, SON.
I... PROMISE, DAD.
I PROMISE

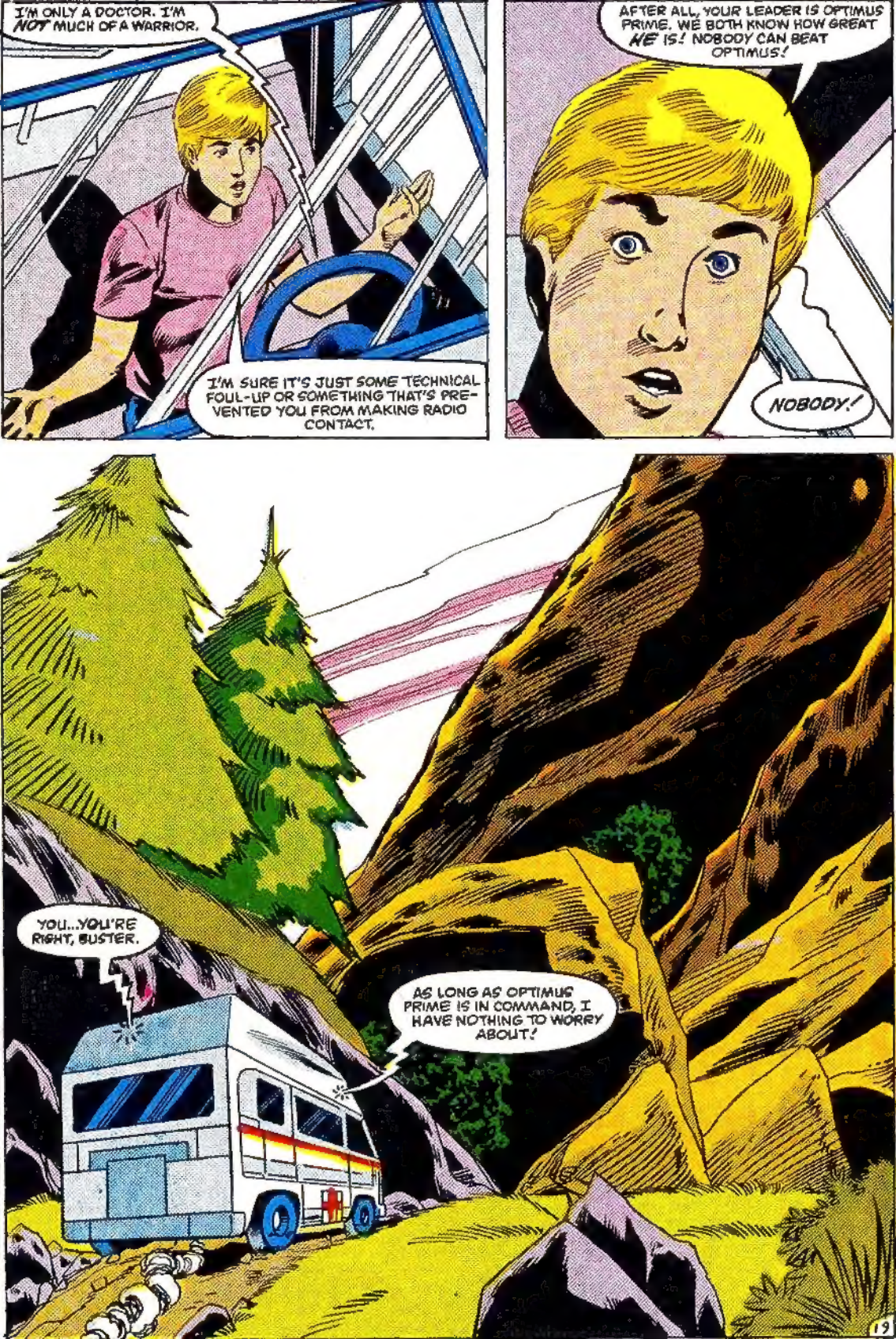

THE ARK...
THE SUPREME ARROGANCE OF SHOCKWAVE TO ASSUME MY COMMAND! NO MATTER. FOR NOW, I GRANT HIM HIS FOLLY.
HOWEVER, ONCE I AND MY FELLOW DECEPTICONS RECOVER FROM OUR INJURIES, I'LL SEE TO IT THAT HE REGRETS EVER RETURNING TO THE RANKS OF THE LIVING!
GREETINGS, MEGATRON. MY MONITORING INSTRUMENTS SHOW A 27.6 % IMPROVEMENT IN YOUR OPERATING CAPACITY. DO YOUR INTERNAL SENSORS CORRELATE?
THEY DO.. COMMANDER SHOCKWAVE
GOOD. I'LL REQUIRE THE SERVICES OF EVERY OPTIMUM-FUNCTIONING DECEPTICON TO CARRY OUT MY PLANS
HIS PLANS! HIS PLANS!! THE VERY THOUGHT NEARLY OVER-LOADS MY CEREBRO-CIRCUITRY!
COMMANDER SHOCKWAVE, YOU STILL HAVEN'T EXPLAINED YOUR PRESENCE HERE ON EARTH, NOR YOUR WHEREABOUTS FOR THE LAST FOUR MILLION YEARS!
SUFFICE IT TO SAY I IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED THE ARK TO EARTH AFTER IT CRASHED TO INVESTIGATE. I THEN BECAME NON-OPERATIONAL, AND STAYED THAT WAY UNTIL RECENTLY.
YES COMMANDER
BUT I WON'T STOP TRYING TO FIND OUT!
REVEALING THE PRECISE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT CAUSED MY SHUTDOWN MIGHT TEMPT YOU INTO TRYING TO DUPLICATE THEM. THUS, I WOULD BE ILLOGICAL FOR ME TO DIVULGE MORE DETAILS. DON'T YOU AGREE?

MY ADVICE TO YOU, MEGATRON, IS TO CONCERN YOURSELF MORE WITH THE PRESENT.
AS YOU CAN SEE, SKYWARP, RUMBLE, FRENZY AND SOUNDWAVE -- ALL NOW RECOVERED AFTER SUSTAINING INJURIES WHILE UNDER YOUR COMMAND* -- ARE NEARLY FINISHED CLEANING UP THE AUTOBOT WRECKS THAT STILL LIE ABOUT
* AS SEEN IN TRANSFORMERS # 6
SEE THAT THEY ARE PROPERLY PREPARED, SOUNDWAVE
YES, COMMANDER
PREPARED FOR WHAT?

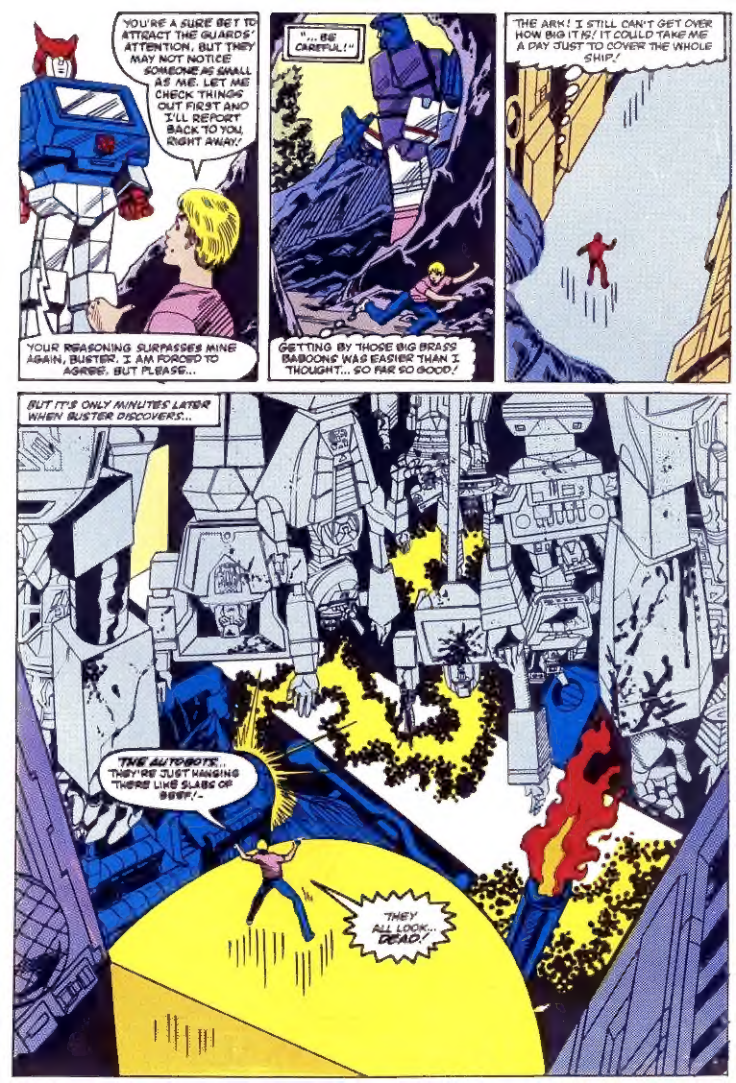
TO BE USED AS SPARE PARTS OF COURSE
THEY, ALONG WITH THEIR FALLEN COMRADES, WILL FULFILL THE MAINTENANCE NEEDS OF US DECEPTICONS FOR A LONG TIME TO COME
HA- MY ARCH FOE THE MIGHTY OPTIMUS PRIME REDUCED TO A MERE SUPPLY CHIEF!
AS ALWAYS, YOU UNDERESTIMATE OPTIMUS PRIME, MEGATRON. NO, HE WILL NOT BE CUT UP INTO WIRES AND MICROCHIPS. HIS VALUE IS FAR GREATER TO US IF WE KEEP HIM FUNCTIONAL, FOR IT IS LOGICAL TO ASSUME THAT AN AUTOBOT OF HIS STATURE CONTAINS WITHIN HIM--
--THE CREATION MATRIX!
BY THE DIVINE WELD! THE CREATION MATRIX IS THE COMPUTER PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS ITS POSSESSOR TO CONSTRUCT NEW TRANSFORMER LIFE! ITS POWER IS THE STUFF OF LEGENDS!
IT IS SAID ONCE EVERY TEN MILLENIA A NEW AUTOBOT LEADER IS CHOSEN AND ENCODED WITH THE MATRIX.
I CALCULATE WITH 99.7% CERTAINTY THAT, BEFORE LEAVING CYBERTRON, OPTIMUS PRIME WAS THE LAST SUCH AUTOBOT
AND IF ME HAS THE PROGRAM, I MEAN TO GET IT
AND DO WHAT WITH IT?
THE PRESENT ELEVEN DECEPTICONS ARE NOT SUFFICIENT TO FULFILL MY PLANS. I WILL USE THE CREATION MATRIX TO BUILD MORE DECEPTICONS. MANY MORE--

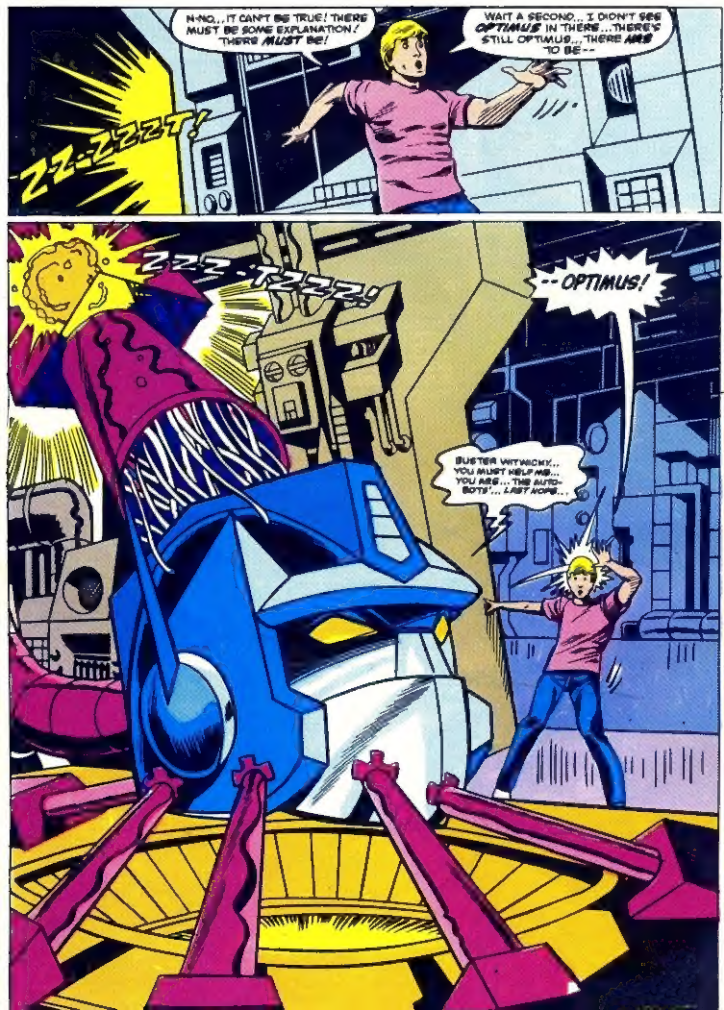

- AND THEN WE SHALL CONQUER THIS PLANET!
HAVE BEEN STUDYING THE EARTHLINGS
THEY ARE WEAK
STUPID
BY EVERY KNOWN MEASURE WE ARE THEIR SUPERIORS
THEIR PLANET'S ENERGY RESOURCES SHALL BECOME OURS!
WHILE THEY BECOME OUR SLAVES!
AND THE TIME TO BEGIN OUR REIGN IS NOW!
COMPLETING HIS TRANSFORMATION TO HIS


ELSEWHERE...
REMEMBER, RATCHET, WHEN THOSE PARAMEDICS WERE RUSHING YOU TO AN EMERGENCY BEFORE IT WAS OKAY TO DISREGARD THE TRAFFIC LAWS --
-- BUT NOW YOU HAVE TO OBEY THEM!
I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND THESE SILLY EARTHEN CUSTOMS! I CAN DRIVE MYSELF WITHOUT ANYONE TELLING ME--
PAY ATTENTION! WE'RE COMING TO A RED LIGHT!
NOW STOP AND WAIT FOR IT TO CHANGE.
LISTEN, FRIEND TRAFFIC SIGNAL, WE'RE IN A HURRY, SO IF YOU COULD PLEASE TURN GREEN...
IT DOESN'T HEAR YOU, RATCHET. IT'S ONLY A MACHINE.
I'M A MACHINE, AND I HEAR YOU, BUSTER!
SPANJACK
YES, BUT YOU'RE DIFFERENT, YOU RE--
AHH, HE CHANGED!
THANK YOU, FRIEND TRAFFIC SIGNAL. MAY THE REST OF THE DAY FIND YOU IN PROPER WORKING ORDER
YOU SEE, BUSTER, YOU HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO TALK TO PEOPLE.
I... I'LL TRY TO KEEP THAT IN MIND, RATCHET.
SOME MILES LATER..
THERE'S MOUNT ST. HILARY! BUSTER, WHAT IF SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE AUTOBOTS? WHAT WILL I DO THEN?


I'M ONLY A DOCTOR. I'M NOT MUCH OF A WARRIOR.
I'M SURE IT'S JUST SOME TECHNICAL FOUL-UP OR SOMETHING THAT'S PREVENTED YOU FROM MAKING RADIO CONTACT.
AFTER ALL, YOUR LEADER IS OPTIMUS PRIME. WE BOTH KNOW HOW GREAT HE IS! NOBODY CAN BEAT OPTIMUS!
NOBODY!
YOU...YOU'RE RIGHT, BUSTER.
AS LONG AS OPTIMUS PRIME IS IN COMMAND, I HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!

BUT LET'S STOP HERE BEFORE THE CAVE ENTRANCE, JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE!
YOU'RE TOO PARANOID, RATCHET.
JUST TAKE A LOOK FOR YOUR--
--UH-OH!
RATCHET, I--
I...I CAN SEE, TOO! MY WORST FEARS ARE REALIZED!
BEFORE THE CAVE ENTRANCE STAND FRENZY AND RUMBLE! THE DECEPTICONS HAVE TAKEN OVER THE ARK!
I MAY BE THE LAST AUTOBOT STILL ALIVE!
I MUST SNEAK BY THOSE DECEPTICON GUARDS AND GET TO THE ARK, FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED--EVEN IF I SHOULD DIE IN THE TRYING!
RATCHET, LISTEN TO ME...


YOU'RE A SURE BET TO ATTRACT THE GUARDS' ATTENTION, BUT THEY MAY NOT NOTICE SOMEONE AS SMALL AS ME. LET ME CHECK THINGS OUT FIRST AND I'LL REPORT BACK TO YOU, RIGHT AWAY.
YOUR REASONING SURPASSES MINE AGAIN, BUSTER. I AM FORCED TO AGREE. BUT PLEASE...
"... BE CAREFUL!"
GETTING BY THOSE BIG BRASS BABOONS WAS EASIER THAN I THOUGHT... SO FAR SO GOOD!
THE ARK! I STILL CAN'T GET OVER HOW BIG IT IS! IT COULD TAKE ME A DAY JUST TO COVER THE WHOLE SHIP!
BUT IT'S ONLY MINUTES LATER WHEN BUSTER DISCOVERS...
"THE AUTOBOTS"... THEY'RE JUST HANGING THERE LIKE SLABS OF BEEF.-
"THEY ALL LOOK... DEAD!"


N-NO... IT CAN'T BE TRUE! THERE MUST BE SOME EXPLANATION! THERE *MUST* BE!
WAIT A SECOND... I DIDN'T SEE *OPTIMUS* IN THERE... THERE'S STILL OPTIMUS... THERE *HAS* TO BE--
ZZ-ZZZT!
ZZZ-TZZZ!
--OPTIMUS!
BUSTER WITWICKY... YOU MUST HELP ME! YOU ARE... THE AUTO-BOTS'... LAST HOPE...